

Meeting Summary of the Senate Bill 375 Regional Targets Advisory Committee (RTAC)

Tuesday, May 5, 2009
Sierra Hearing Room
Cal/EPA Headquarters
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Discussion Highlights

MPO Model Assessment Update

Bruce Griesenbeck from the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) provided an update on the RTAC's metropolitan planning organization (MPO) model assessment survey. Since March, MPOs have worked to normalize the model self-assessment and incorporate information on statewide data collection efforts. RTAC members discussed the wide variability in modeling capabilities among the regions and how it relates to setting targets. One approach uses model results and focuses on identifying ways to improve the regional modeling capability. Another approach focuses on developing a measurement based on policies and programs that are either planned or in place. A hybrid of these approaches was also discussed where the second approach is used in the interim until regional modeling capabilities are improved. No final decisions were made.

Developing a Regional Emission Reduction Target

ARB staff reviewed the issues associated with developing a target-setting metric as presented at the April 22 RTAC meeting. The presentation described the different choices available when deciding how an emission target should be expressed. The choices are as follows:

- Absolute or relative
- Reduction from current year conditions or reduction from future year conditions
- Uniform statewide or MPO-specific

No decisions were reached on the target metric at this meeting. Based on the straw vote by the members on each question, the committee indicated a strong preference for a target expressed as a relative per unit reduction from current year conditions. They were split in their opinions on whether the target metric should be uniform statewide or MPO-specific. The RTAC members made the following observations:

Absolute or Relative

- A relative metric was discussed as the preferred choice
- Per capita and per household were discussed as preferred "per unit" metrics since they are currently used by MPOs and are both easily understood by the public; however, no conclusions were drawn between the two

Reduction from Current or Future Year Conditions

- Reductions compared to a current year was discussed as the preferred choice
- The main question was focused on the choice of the current year (1990 or something more current)?
- Should the current year be fixed or floating?

Uniform Statewide or MPO-Specific

- Discussion was initially split between an MPO-specific approach to account for regional differences and a uniform target that would be easier to develop
- A third option of developing a modified uniform method for target setting, where factors are identified to account for regional differences, was discussed as a way to balance the two concerns
- RTAC requested region specific data in order to set the stage for the next level of discussion

Interregional Travel

ARB and Caltrans staff reviewed information and options to consider when accounting for interregional travel, including a Caltrans presentation on the Statewide Household Travel Survey. RTAC members discussed several ways regions could choose to account for emissions related with interregional travel. Several issues were discussed, such as:

- Balance between jobs and affordable housing
- Consideration of purely “recreational” trips
- Fairness of assigning emissions reduction responsibility to regions that economically benefit from interregional trips (for employment or tourism)
- SB 375 statutory language possibly solving the interregional travel problem in the Sustainable Community Strategy or jobs/housing balance requirements

Future RTAC Meeting Actions

RTAC members requested additional MPO information be presented on the inputs and outputs of their modeling scenarios at the next meeting. They also requested further development of the ‘modified uniform’ idea for setting targets. RTAC also expressed a desire to further discuss SB 375 statutory language as it relates to the pros and cons of meeting a target with an SCS or APS – as well as other related legal/political/planning questions.

Members present:

Chesley, A.	Cohen, S.	Devereaux, G.
Dickinson, R.	Doyle, S.	Eaken, A.
Gallegos, G.	Heminger, S.	Katz, R.
Libicki, S.	McKeever, M.	Parkinson, P.
Parks, L.	Rawson, M.	Wallerstein, B.
Walters, J.	Whiteside, C.	Woo, M.